



Denying Sanctuary: A Strategic Analysis of OEF

Greg Roberts, PhD
CSA OEF Study Group

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The Endstate

- Afghanistan no longer a safe haven for terrorists
 - President Bush: GWOT
 - Eliminate terrorist safe havens and support
 - President Obama: War against al-Qaeda
 - Prevent AQ's return to Afghanistan and Pakistan



2001-03



- Political objective: A moderate, broad-based government
- Military objectives:
 - Eliminate Taliban regime and leaders
 - Eliminate al-Qaeda forces and leaders



2003-09



- Political objective: A moderate, democratic government capable of effectively controlling its territory
- Military objectives:
 - Defeat Taliban, AQ, and affiliated forces
 - Stabilize the south and east
 - Build Afghan security forces
 - Defend the central government



2009-14



- Political objectives:
 - Prevent the Taliban from overthrowing the government
 - Reconciliation and reintegration
 - Selectively build government capacity
- Military objectives:
 - Reverse the Taliban's momentum
 - Deny access to key population centers
 - Degrade insurgency to point ANSF can handle
 - Build ANSF up for security transition



Post-OEF

- NATO: Resolute Support
 - Train, advise, and assist ANDSF
- Operation FREEDOM'S SENTINEL
 - “Counterterrorism operations against the remnants of al-Qaeda to ensure that Afghanistan is never again used to stage attacks against our homeland”



Conclusions

- Strategic disconnects
 - Internal logic: eliminating sanctuary = building governance
 - Resources
 - Political will
- Flawed assumptions & endstate feasibility
 - Safe havens & international borders
 - Terrorist safe havens as ungoverned spaces